



Arnold Schwarzenegger  
GOVERNOR

**CALIFORNIA ARCHITECTS BOARD**  
PUBLIC PROTECTION THROUGH EXAMINATION, LICENSURE, AND REGULATION

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## **Unlicensed Practice Penalty**

There is sometimes confusion among candidates regarding the use of the terms architect, architecture, or architectural. Please be advised that only an architect licensed in the State of California may refer to him/herself using these terms.

Business and Professions Code, Section 5536 Practice Without License or Holding Self Out as Architect; Misdemeanor states:

- (a) It is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of not less than one hundred dollars (\$100) nor more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000), or by imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding one year, or by both that fine and imprisonment, for any person who is not licensed to practice architecture under this chapter, to practice architecture in this state, to use any term confusingly similar to the word architect, to use the stamp of a licensed architect, as provided in Section 5536.1, or to advertise or put out any sign, card, or other device that might indicate to the public that he or she is an architect, that he or she is qualified to engage in the practice of architecture, or that he or she is an architectural designer.
- (b) It is a misdemeanor, punishable as specified in subdivision (a), for any person who is not licensed to practice architecture under this chapter to affix a stamp or seal which bears the legend "State of California" or words or symbols that represent or imply that the person is so licensed by the state to prepare plans, specifications, or instruments of service.
- (c) It is a misdemeanor, punishable as specified in subdivision (a), for any person to advertise or represent that he or she is a "registered building designer" or is registered or otherwise licensed by the state as a building designer.

There have been several instances where candidates' licenses were delayed, and they were fined for violations of the above section. It is a candidate's responsibility to know this area of the law and to comply with its provisions.

Please direct enforcement-related questions to the Board's Enforcement Unit at (916) 575-7208.